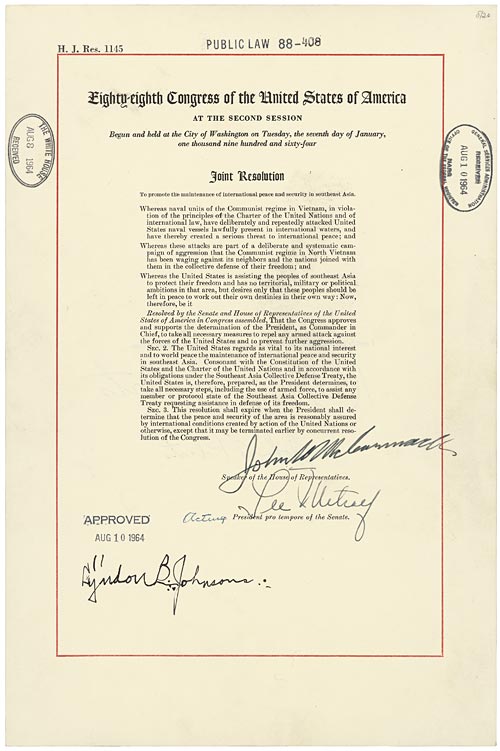
Stations for the Vietnam War



My Lai Massacre

On March 16, 1968 the angry and frustrated men of Charlie Company, 11th Brigade, American Division entered the Vietnamese village of My Lai. "This is what you've been waiting for -- search and destroy -- and you've got it," said their superior officers. A short time later the killing began. When news of the atrocities surfaced, it sent shockwaves through the U.S. political establishment, the military's chain of command, and an already divided American public

The **My Lai Massacre** was the mass murder of 347 to 504 unarmed citizens in South Vietnam, all of whom were civilians and some of whom were women and children, conducted by US Army forces. Many of the victims were sexually abused, beaten, tortured, or maimed, and some of the bodies were found mutilated .2 The massacre took place in the hamlets of Mỹ Lai and My Khe of Sơn Mỹ village during the Vietnam War. At first the Army argued that the soldiers were just following orders but as the brutality of the situation became apparent to the American public it became one of the most cited examples for why the United States should withdraw from Vietnam.

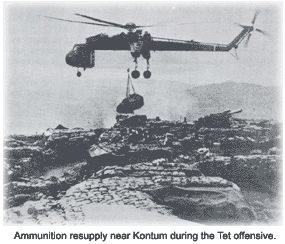


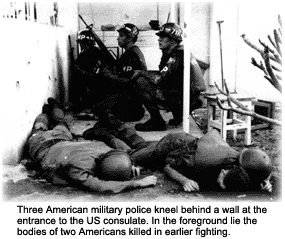
Tet Offensive

The Tet Offensive was a series of surprise attacks by the Vietcong (rebel forces sponsored by North Vietnam) and North Vietnamese forces, on scores of cities, towns, and hamlets throughout South Vietnam. It was considered to be a turning point in the Vietnam War.

North Vietnamese leaders believed they could not sustain the heavy losses inflicted by the Americans indefinitely and had to win the war with an all-out military effort. In addition, Ho Chi Minh was nearing death, and they needed a victory before that time came.

The combined forces of the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese Regular Army (NVA), about 85,000 strong, launched a major offensive throughout South Vietnam.

The attacks began on January 31, 1968, the first day of the Lunar New Year, Vietnam's most important holiday. It took weeks for U.S. and South Vietnamese troops to retake all of the captured cities, including the former imperial capital of Hue.

Even though the offensive was a military failure for the North Vietnamese Communists and Vietcong (VC), it was a political and psychological victory for them because it dramatically contradicted optimistic claims by the U.S. government that the war was all but over.

**Aftermath**

To a growing segment of the American public, Tet demonstrated the resolve of the Vietcong and the tenuous control South Vietnam had over its own territory. It also helped unite those at home in their dissenting opinions of the war.

Invasion of Cambodia and Laos

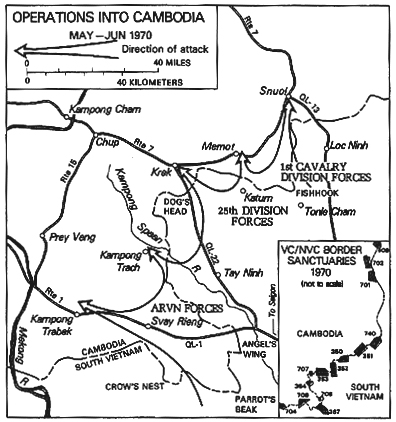
From the beginning of the Vietnam War, the NLF had used bases situated just inside the borders of neighboring Cambodia. For many years US military advisers had wanted these bases to be bombed. President Lyndon B. Johnson had rejected this strategy as he feared it would undermine the anti-communist government of Prince Sihanouk.

Soon after becoming president, Richard Nixon gave permission for the bombing of Cambodia. In an effort to avoid international protest at this action, it was decided to keep information about these bombing raids hidden. Pilots were sworn to secrecy and their 'operational logs' were falsified.

The bombing failed to destroy the NLF bases and so in April, 1970, Nixon decided to send in troops to finish off the job. The invasion of Cambodia provoked a wave of demonstrations in the United States and in one of these, four students were killed when National guardsmen opened fire at Kent State University. In the days that followed, 450 colleges closed in protest against the killings.

The arrival of US marines in Cambodia also created hostility amongst the local population. The Cambodian communist movement, the Khmer Rouge, had received little support from the peasants before the United States invasion. Now they were in a position to appeal to their nationalist sentiments and claimed that Cambodia was about to be taken over by the United States. During 1970 and 1971, membership of the Khmer Rouge grew rapidly.

Laos, another country bordering Vietnam, was also invaded by US troops. As with Cambodia, this action increased the support for the communists (Pathet Lao) and by 1973, they controlled most of the country.



Pentagon Papers

On June 13, 1971, The New York Times began publishing the Pentagon Papers, a documentary history tracing the ultimately doomed involvement of the United States in a grinding war in the jungles and rice paddies of Southeast Asia.

They demonstrated, among other things, that the Johnson Administration had systematically lied, not only to the public but also to Congress, about a subject of transcendent national interest and significance.

The Government sought and won a court order restraining further publication after three articles had appeared. Other newspapers then began publishing. They, too, were restrained, until finally, on June 30, 1971, the United States Supreme Court ruled, by a vote of 9 to 0, that publication could resume.

